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SUBJECT: TAIWAN MULLS NEW ACRONYM FOR CROSS-STRAIT ECONOMIC
PACT

Classified By: Stephen M. Young, AIT Director, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Under domestic political pressure, the Ma administration plans to adopt a new acronym to describe its planned economic cooperation pact with the PRC. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) In an April 1 conversation with econoff, a senior Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) official noted that potential legal action has prompted the Ma administration to abandon yet another acronym for the mooted cross-Straits economic cooperation pact with China. Originally dubbed the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), the preferred nomenclature shifted to Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) after fears that the CECA acronym was too evocative of the Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) the PRC has already concluded with Hong Kong. Administration officials initially denied that the change from CECA to ECFA was in response to opposition pressure, maintaining instead that the revision was a means of avoiding confusion with both the Carolinas Electrical Contractors Association and Serbian singing sensation Svetlana "Ceca" Raznatovic.

¶3. (C) The MAC official explained that Taiwan authorities were initially able to withstand a legal challenge from the East Coast Football Association over the ECFA moniker, but became increasingly concerned after the Evangelical Child and Family Agency also considered pursuing a formal complaint. "We can handle the DPP and the football players," explained the official, "but no one wants to mess with adoptive parents from the Midwest." According to the official, the administration considered a Framework Agreement for Cooperation on Economics (FECA), but scuttled the idea after the opposition learned of the proposal and threatened to retaliate with its own Framework Agreement for Cooperation on Economics Language to oppose the initiative. Instead, MAC told us the administration has formally settled on Framework Agreement for Cooperation on Economics (FACE) as the new acronym. As part of a comprehensive effort to blunt domestic criticism that the agreement will lead to unfair market access for Chinese competitors, MAC is working with private industry associations to develop a Securing Access by Verifying Enforcement (SAVE) organization to monitor Chinese compliance with the eventual pact. A joint SAVE/FACE conference is slated for later this week to launch the acronyms and help build public support for administration policy.

¶4. (C) COMMENT. Since Serbia is so close to Kosovo, we understand why Taiwan dropped the CECA acronym. END COMMENT.

¶5. (SBU) Happy April Fool's Day from Taiwan.

YOUNG